

## Ride Like a Girl

By: Jennifer Ott

Riding my R1250GSA along the crystal blue waters of Glacier National Park this past summer, I felt like I had come home. Motorcycles have been the primary focus of most of my adult life. Who would have known that a skinny, redheaded 16-year-old in 1982 writing her motorcycle beginner's test would lead me here, nearly 40 years later?



It was April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1982, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. After riding the last five years on the

back of my father's 1975 Suzuki GT750 Water Buffalo, I knew this was the life I wanted. He would take me to track and field meets on the back of his motorcycle, and I was obsessed! When the day dawned that I was legally able to get my own permit, nothing was going to stop me. I passed my written test with a perfect score and managed to secure a road test the following week. I had purchased a small Honda 50cc scooter and arrived at the parking lot test with five other riders. Three were on Harley-Davidsons, and the other two were on Goldwing's. I remember one of them laughing at me and elbowing the other. "Look at the cute redhead on her little red Honda scooter!" At the end of the parking lot test, I was the one laughing, as I was the only one moving on with a road permit. My cute little Honda passed the cone test with flying colors.

I quickly graduated to a 1979 Honda C400T Hawk. As my scooter had been an automatic, I had a friend ride the Hawk home for me. I asked my father if he could teach me to ride it, and he told me he would the following day and headed to work. Being the impatient girl that I was, "tomorrow" was not soon enough for me, so I simply threw a leg over the bike, and with a few bumpy clutch maneuvers, soon had it under control and away I went.

Through the 90's, I ran through motorcycle after motorcycle. I wanted to try every kind! After the Hawk, I bought a 1982 Honda CB900 Custom with a Windjammer fairing, saddlebags and a trunk. A teenage girl riding that bike! I have no idea what I was thinking. But I knew that I did not want to be defined by being a girl that rode a scooter. Those fellow permit testers had made an impact on me. After the CB900, I fell in love

with a 1988 Kawasaki Ninja EX250R. The lines were gorgeous, and the bike was so easy to ride. It fell into the corners, was inexpensive to insure, and it went far on a tank of gas. I rode it for six months, and then had an offer to buy it for more than I paid, new. With that money, I purchased a super rare 1986 Suzuki RG500 Gamma. This bike was the bee's knees! It was a two-stroke with a square four engine, rotary valves and four exhaust pipes, including two that exited under the back seat. It had 95 horsepower and could beat anything on the street at the time. It was as close to a race replica as you could ever have. Did I sometimes imagine I was Kevin Schwantz on the street? You bet, eh? I remember the time that I got caught by a police officer pulling a long wheelie on it. When I took my helmet off and the officer saw my long, red hair he stopped and did a double take. I do believe he expected a different gender under the full-face helmet and leathers. When I told him that "it just got away from me, I had no idea what happened" he told me to take it home and get a smaller bike. I was let off with just a warning, instead of a careless driving charge! Another funny memory is when my riding group was careening up Highway 11 to Arrowhead Provincial Park and the tent that was strapped to the back seat of my 1986 Suzuki RG500 Gamma slid off onto the exhaust pipes and caught fire!

For the next 29 years, I would move from bike to bike, as we tend to do: 1988 Honda Hawk GT, 1990 Honda CB-1 (400 four), 1983 Honda 750 Interceptor, and more. I still own three two strokes: a 1988 Yamaha TDR50, a 1986 Yamaha YSR50 and a 1987 Yamaha TZR250. These I keep in Canada, and my daughter races those on the track.

In 2017, I purchased a brand-new BMW G310GS model sight unseen. It arrived in November of that year, I joined the BMW Club of Ontario, and began a new motorcycling chapter of my life that elevated my motorcycle journey to a new level, including joining the BMW MOA in January of 2018 at the Toronto Motorcycle Show. With the BMW community, I found a home that loved the journey of the open

road, travelling to far distances and seeing the country which we all love. I attended many group rides, usually riding to eat. That seems to be a common theme for BMW Riders. I attended a few rallies and met a wonderful man from Michigan through the BMW MOA Facebook and invited him out to the BMW Finger Lakes Rally in Watkins Glen, NY. We got along famously and began to text back and forth religiously. I ended up riding my little G310GS back and forth to Michigan to spent time with Marc, and eventually made the decision to live and ride full time with Marc in Commerce, Michigan. It has been three years now, and I have never been happier. I now work for BMW Motorcycles of Detroit, selling motorcycles to people that are longing for the open road, and seeing where that road can bring them! It truly is a dream to sell BMW motorcycle to people, bring them into the fold of the BMW MOA, and make friends along the way as I do it.



In the end, my little BMW G310GS led me to the BMW Club of Ontario, that led me to the BMW MOA, that led me to the BMW Finger Lakes rally, that led me to Marc Neville, who led me to Michigan selling BMW Motorcycles and becoming the BMW TCD president and now a BMW MOA Ambassador. What an amazing path that my motorcycle led me on! I have a garage full of BMW motorcycles, a loving and supportive partner that kisses me goodbye when I ride off on a 750-mile day and awaits me with the garage door open when I return. I have



a fulfilling job that I ride to and from every day, and co-worker that understand my passion with time off during good weather to log the miles and attend BMW MOA events. I belong to four BMW Clubs including the BMW MOA, BMW Touring Club of Detroit (I am now the new president of this wonderful club), the BMW Club of Ontario and the BMW Niagara Riders.



Did I envision a life like this when I wrote my motorcycle beginner test in 1982? Riding a 2020 BMW R1250GSA all over the country and selling BMW motorcycles? You bet I did!

**November Ride of 1900 Miles**  
**By: Peter Stephan**

Five days. Yes, five days of great early November weather compelled me to pack up the VERSYS 1000 with the essentials and point it to the southeast coast of the USA.



First thing was to get out of the Detroit metro area and head towards the hills of southeast OH and northern West Virginia. Taking I-75 to Dayton and then making the left on OH 35 to Columbus. Stayed on OH 35 until I got to Jackson, the city that has the Speyside bourbon oak barrel production facility. Then south on OH 93 to Ironton. Left on OH 52. Crossed over the river to I-64 near Huntington WV. My overnight was at the Hampton Inn in Barboursville.

I have been down this way many times. If I hadn't left home so late, I would have ridden OH 141 and OH 775 via 325 out of Rio Grande. These two are a hoot to ride.

I was committed to getting to Pawley Island the afternoon of November 2. So, I hightailed it on I-64, I-74, US-501 and making the right on Hwy 17 south. Here I found the Best Western to spend a couple of nights at. This location was better than Myrtle Beach (which has many choices on the beach). This is because the room rate at the BW was good, the room comfortable and quiet, and nearby was a couple of places I wanted to check out.

One was the PIT. The other was the Rustic Tavern. The south tip of Pawley's Island (to take a hike/walk) was another POI. The Hopsewee Plantation was on my list. And finally, a revisit to Brookgreen Gardens.

You can check out the Pawley's Island Tavern here: [Pawley's Island Tavern](#). The food is good. Try the crab cakes. You can sit in or out, make

acquaintance with more of the other guests (locals), listen to the band play or watch sports on the TVs.



The Rustic Table is more high-end. [The Rustic Table](#). Good little bar. Nice wine and liquor selection. I had the trout appetizer that was my meal. Headless, coated and fried whole trout with an apricot sauce.



The south tip of Pawley's Island where I had intended to take a walk on the beach was closed down for repairs due to hurricane Ian. So, I found another parking nook to get to the ocean. Many of the accesses from the street and homes had closures of the board walk to the sand due to the hurricane causing damage to the wood structures. A great deal of sand was moved in and around the many homes that line this coast. I did get to dip my toe in the Atlantic on a very sunny and 75-degree day.

I was curious about the former low country rice plantation named [Hopsewee](#). It is here that Thomas Lynch, Jr. was born and the second youngest person to sign the Declaration of Independence. Still a solid home. Artifacts to view of the past. A tearoom for a meal (in another building). Walking around outside I was pestered by the mosquitos due to the wetlands associated with the North Santee River.



My next stop, on the way towards Litchfield Beach and Brookgreen Gardens was to take a rolling tour of historic Georgetown and find a place for lunch. Many great homes here. A very large steel and paper mill can be found nearby. The Big Tuna Raw Bar was my choice for lunch in the Georgetown Historic District. Here I had a nice shrimp salad while looking out over the East Bay on this sunny day.



Hopped back on the bike and headed to Brookgreen Gardens. [Brookgreen Sculpture](#). This is a great place to spend some quiet time examining the artwork outside. I entered the



Stanley and Naomi Bleifeld Gallery and became more knowledgeable about Grainger McKoy. His wood carvings of birds are fantastic. Such detail. You won't believe the detail.

Friday, I left the BW to head towards Knoxville TN where I would spend the night in Sevierville at the Hampton Inn. I avoided the interstate until Spartanburg. A good number of three-digit local roads had me sightseeing the cotton and soybean fields, and forests. Finding gas along the way became an issue at one point though. Sunny and warm for my whole ride. The only "fly in the ointment" of my otherwise smooth ride was the traffic due to construction on I-40. I took several detours to keep moving into and out of Maggie Valley. Getting on US 276 helped a great deal. It was observed heading northbound, once I got on I-40 that the southbound traffic that Friday afternoon was a "parking lot" for many miles.

The Hampton Inn is a comfortable stay and within walking distance, albeit having to cross a busy road with no pedestrian crossing, to The Chop House. A nice wine, a very good Prime Rib, and bourbon for dessert was had here.



Saturday November 5, I headed north via I-40, I-640 and I-75. The weather forecast predicted dry roads, cooling conditions and winds with gusts of 50mph plus. It wasn't too bad until I got into Ohio. There were many times where keeping the bike upright meant some effort on my part to do so. Once I got home the rain began.

A special thanks to **Jennifer Ott and Peter Stephan** for their articles and pictures featured this month.

**Remember...** All published articles earn a free breakfast, entry into the year-end newsletter drawing AND your fellow members and the newsletter editor will appreciate your articles. You will also earn points toward the **2023 MOTY Awards!**



## MSTR Heads Up

Here is a listing of some of the upcoming local events and meetings within the next few months. If you know of a local motorcycle event in Michigan or Ontario the MSTR would be interested in send Rachel Durling an e-mail to [Communications@mstriders.com](mailto:Communications@mstriders.com) with the details.

## MSTR East Breakfast Meetings

**This month's east side breakfast meeting will be on Saturday January 28, 2023, at 9:00am George's Senate at 39430 Dun Rovin Dr., Northville, MI 48168.**



## MSTR West Lunch Meetings

**Our next west side lunch meeting will be on Saturday February 11, 2023, at 11:00am at the Alibi Bar & Grill, 1394 East Riverside Dr., Ionia, MI 48846.**

## Swap Meet Hosted by BMW Motorcycles of SE MI

## 2022 MOTY Banquet



We have our **2022 Member of the Year (MOTY)** banquet this year planned at Zerbo's on Saturday February 4, 2023, starting at 5:00-6:00pm for meet and greet, 7:00pm dinner and 8:00pm members meeting and awards ceremony. We have 63 MSTR members signed up this year (please do not show up earlier than 5:00pm). Former MOTY and ROTY winners, please bring your hats.

Do you have old, unused, extra motorcycle gear, luggage or parts laying around your garage? Or are you looking for that hard-to-find component for your project bike? Hosted by BMW Motorcycles Southeast Michigan and put on by us. This is a great opportunity to connect with like-minded enthusiasts to shop for or sell motorcycle gear, luggage, parts, and accessories. Not only will you have the opportunity to purchase or sell motorcycle parts, but you'll be also in the company of friendly and engaging enthusiasts like yourself. So, please join us on Saturday, February 25th starting at 12:00 pm noon (set up from 11:00am-noon) and going until we close at 4:00 pm. We look forward to seeing you.

Please RSVP at <https://bmwmotomichigan.com/events/mstr-motorcycle-swap-meet/>. Not required but highly recommended.



### MSTR 2023 Rides

Please check the MSTR website on the events page for a of rides and events for 2023 ([www.mstriders.com](http://www.mstriders.com)). If you are interested in volunteering, please send an email to the address above.

Note: MSTRider membership is required to attend an MSTR riding event. We will not be able to add your name to an event sign-up list unless you are a current MSTRider or until your New MSTRider Form or MSTRider Renewal form and fee are received. Go to [www.mstriders.com](http://www.mstriders.com), then navigate to the Resources page and scroll down to the **New MSTRider Form** or the **MSTRider Renewal Form**.

# MoArk Adventure 15

April 12<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Missouri/Arkansas



This ride is a “curve-chaser’s” delight. There are three days of riding, with 1,000 tire-shredding miles in the Ozark’s to start out your riding season. Check your tires for tread prior to this ride, the roads here will chew them up aggressively. Many riders have shown up with “I think” tires and ended up buying expensive tires mid-ride and losing a day of riding. If in doubt, mount new tires.

The MoArk event begins in Farmington, Missouri. We’ll meet there for dinner on Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. There will be a mandatory **point** rider meeting around 8:00 or 8:30pm and then a mandatory rider meeting at 9:00pm to sign a waiver and put riding groups together. On Thursday morning you can choose one of three routes from Farmington to Mountain Home, Arkansas. We’ll then be staying Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup> in Mountain Home. On Friday you have a choice of five loop routes (or make up your own) where you’ll be riding on some of the best roads in Arkansas. On Saturday you again have a choice of three routes to return to Farmington, Missouri from Mountain Home, arriving mid-afternoon and then prepare for the ride or trailer trip back to Michigan.

To join us for MoArk 15 get your name on the sign-up list by sending an email to Ian as shown below. Event information including hotel information, a rider package and GPS routes will only be provided to those who have signed up.

**Event Organizer: Ian Orr**  
**Email: [mclorr1198@gmail.com](mailto:mclorr1198@gmail.com)**

## MSTR Newsletter & Website

The MSTR Newsletter and Website ([www.mstriders.com/](http://www.mstriders.com/)) belong to you, the riders. They both can only be as good and as interesting as you make them. If you have something to say about a ride, your bike, perhaps a trip you are planning, whatever, send it in for the newsletter and/or website to:

**Rachel Durling:**  
[communications@mstriders.com](mailto:communications@mstriders.com)

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# MSTR Photo Gallery

The MSTR maintains a Smug Mug photo gallery (<https://mstriders.smugmug.com/>) to allow riders to upload and download pictures of various club events. Upload and download passwords are sent out to participants for each event. Click on the above link or visit the MSTR website and select the MSTR Photo Gallery link to check out all the event pictures.



**Memories from our previous MOTY banquets:**






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